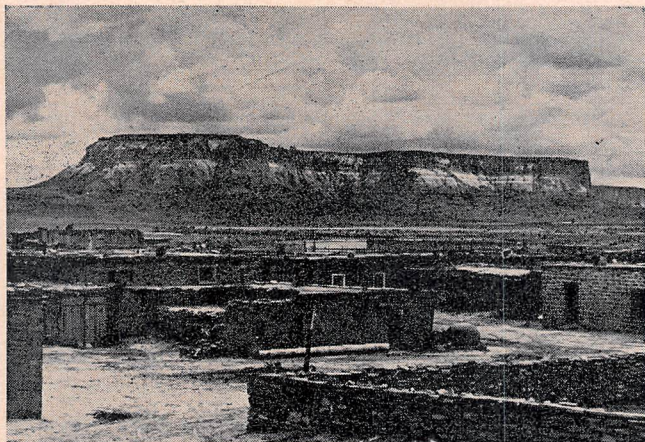


ceremonial objects are made of stone, wood, bone, reeds, and feathers. Tools were originally of stone or bone, as were eating utensils, but acculturation has made the Zuni proficient in the use of modern cutlery and tools.

Cotton is raised and woven for cloth. Costumes are made of rich cloth such as velvet and satin in very bright colors, trimmed in bright ribbons and decorated with much turquoise and silver. Turquoise is also used for jewelry, along with silver which was introduced to the Zunis by Mexican silversmiths a little over 100 years ago. Turkeys and eagles are raised for their feathers which are used in ornamentation.

The Zunis are excellent masons. Their houses were built in terraces one above the other in a circular formation. The house on the perimeter being 3 stories tall, sloping to 1 story nearest the center and central Kiva, or ceremonial chamber. They invented a ventilating flue for the kiva, but no chimney. A typical Zuni house today has 1 story with 3 or 4 rooms, decorated with shawls and blankets. Those houses with 2 stories use the upper floor to store corn. Some houses have curious features because they were originally built to receive the Shalakos, six gods, each of whom must be received in a house built for him. This house must be very long, at times as much as 60 feet, and 12 feet high to accommodate the masks worn. They must have a row of windows opening from another room where special groups may watch the performance of the Shalako dances.



The Zunis believe that medical aids only help the gods to heal. Members of the healing societies use prayers and poultices to assist the gods. There is no reliance upon drugs or alcohol. Jimson weed and Peyote are not used by the Zuni even though all the surrounding tribes use them to induce euphoria and visions. In the case of jimson, the Zuni will use it to loosen the tongue of a man to point out a thief.

The language of the Zunis, once considered a separate stock, has now been placed in the Uto-Aztecan family. There is no definite time value in the language, and even words which we translate into words denoting a particular span of time must carry along an explanation. For example, Stevenson, in her English version of the emergence story, states that "the exodus from the underworlds lasted 4 years (2 days are as 4 years and 4 days are like 8 years and a year is an indeterminate time.) Things of value are associated with water. "To 'bless with water' is the synonym of all blessing... the blessing of rooms to which the gods come is 'water filled'... their ladders are 'water ladders' and the scalp taken in warfare is the 'water-filled covering'." (Benedict, 1934).

The Zuni year is divided into 2 seasons, summer and winter. No calendar is used to determine the dates, they are determined by the priest according to where the sun

appears over a particular mountain. Each solstice is attended by specific ceremonies. The winter begins with the Shalako festival, lasting as many as 8 nights and achieving a "cleansing of the earth". Summer begins with a trip to the sacred Lake of the Dead. Upon the peoples' return the ceremonies begin. The most important are the prayer for rain, the thanksgiving for crops, and the dance of the Kianakwe-gost people who are angry with the Zuni for their destruction and who must be placated.

The societal groupings among the Zunis are complex. All societies have some religious function since the gods control all life. Specific religious activities will be discussed later, but the 3 overlapping social groupings include the warrior societies, the healing societies, and the kachina priests and dancers. A man can, and often does, belong to all three.

The warrior society has, in reality, the least status among the non-militant Zuni. To join, one must have taken a life. The former status of protectors of the community under the leadership of the Bow Priest has degenerated to the position of enforcing decrees and protection of the Kachinas. Thus, even the veterans of World War II had little prestige, although they could belong to this society. The ideal in Zuni life is to fight only when attacked and attribute your victory to the prayers of the priests at home.

The healing societies have a great store of esoteric knowledge. Men study for years to gain this knowledge. The members are summoned in case of illness and they place an obligation upon the patient to partake in the ritual of healing and to join in the society upon his cure. After World War II many families called in healers to cure the discontent and restlessness of the returning veterans. This, in turn, sparked a great increase in membership in the healing societies. The "badge" of membership is the possession of the 'mili' a perfect ear of maize decorated with feathers.

The kachina priests and dancers are usually all men, but women have been admitted on occasion. These represent hundreds of masked gods. Some groups contain 30-40 different masks, while others are in groups of 6, representing the 6 directions. (To a Zuni up and down are also directions). There are six distinct groups of kachinas, each with its own kiva and its own dances. A boy joins the kiva of his ceremonial father who is chosen at his birth. The priests must come from certain families of proper lineage and they own their masks and fetishes, which are buried with them. The masks of the dancers may be borrowed freely.

The social practices of marriage and divorce are simply arranged with little attendant notice paid by the community. Boys and girls seldom meet except, perhaps, in the evening when the girls carry the water jug home. The boy might stop her and ask her for a drink or might ask the girl to make him a throwing stick to catch rabbits. He would then present her with the rabbit caught. This is the ideal courtship. The boy would then go to the girl's house and sit before her father. He would taste the food set before him and then ask for the daughter. If this is agreeable with the daughter, the mother would go into the next room and make up a pallet and they would retire. The next day the girl would wash her hair and put on fine clothes, and, after 4 days, take a large basket of corn to the boy's mother's house. This is all of the ceremonial attached to marriage.

If the couple are not happy together, the divorce is a simple matter. The wife can divorce her husband by making a point of serving at ceremonial feasts. If she meets a man she desires (she can make a tête-à-tête with him and, if he pleases her more than her husband, she signifies this to her husband by placing his possessions



SHALAKO DANCERS. Courtesy Mrs. Evelyn Dahl.

on the doorsill. He gathers up his things, weeps openly, returns to his mother's house and is recorded as unfortunate. If a man is dissatisfied with his wife, or finds her relatives uncongenial, he merely returns to his mother's household. Many divorces occurred during World War II when friends wrote to a Zuni soldier that his wife was unfaithful. This was all that was needed. Most marriages endure because of the great dislike of bickering, but this is especially striking because of the great ease of divorce and the basic institutionalized bond in Zuni culture — the matrilineal family.

In this clan set-up, the women rule the house. The house and the corn belong to the women, the husband is an outsider, and the brothers are united with the household in affairs of importance. The brothers learn the letter-perfect ritual of each house's secret bundle and perpetuate it. On all occasions of importance he returns to his mother's or, upon her death, his oldest sister's house. This is the great social tie, and cuts across the economic life in which the husband is important. The household is usually made up of the grandmother and her husband, her daughters, granddaughters, and their husbands. A man's importance in his home is based, not upon his role as a breadwinner, but upon his role in relationship to its sacred objects. Since the husband does not possess these in his wife's family, he does not become important until his children reach maturity.

Children go through a number of rites of passage in reaching maturity. When a child is born, a ceremonial father is chosen for him. Between the age of 5 and 9 he is initiated into the kiva of this ceremonial father. This does not teach him any esoteric mysteries, it only established as bond with the supernatural. Scar kachinas whip the children to "take off the bad happenings". (Zuni children are never whipped as a corrective punishment) The children are not supposed to be stoic, they are to be frightened and cry aloud. At about the age of 14 they are again whipped by stronger kachinas and the mask is put upon them. Here they learn that the kachinas are impersonators of the gods of the Sacred Lake. They cannot possess a mask until they are married men of substance. These rites are never an ordeal. The boys are accompanied by their ceremonial father and made to feel secure at all times.

Death is made of a little as possible. The funeral rites are the simplest and least dramatic of any the Zuni possess. After a year of quiet mourning a mate feels that the soul of the departed has joined the gods and he or she is free to marry again.

In its economic organization, the Zuni Pueblo is a group society with privately owned land and houses. Economic affairs are given relatively little importance. The pueblo is rich, containing silver, turquoise, peach orchards, vege-

table fields, flocks of sheep, and hunting areas. Every house has a store room filled by the husband. Where there are no men in the household, this room is filled by the men of the community. Even a deer hunt is communal — with the hunt lasting until each man has one deer. Irrigation is practiced as is natural fertilization. A series of barriers is built to divert water from a stream to all parts of a field so that even a short rain will feed an entire field. Rows of sagebrush planted on the western edge of the fields act as a screen to catch wind-borne fine silt which piles up behind each row of bushes. This new soil is carried to the fields by the water in the irrigation ditches. This practice is not so much scientific as ritualistic in repaying the land for the strength it gave. This is found even in a deer hunt where the stone fetishes are placed upon a slain deer to regain the strength they gave the hunter. The blood of the deer is to feed the ground and the spleen left to feed the crows.

Economic surplus is important to man only so he can pay to make a mask, or learn a ritual. He also wishes to be able to entertain the gods at the Shalako in a special house built for them. For this he must feed the cult members for a year for building him this house. Riches are indispensable to a man of prestige — but his possessions are not important, only the role he has been allowed to play in the ceremonial life because of them. A poor man in an important clan of required lineage for certain rituals has more status than a man with many possessions. Even though a man has gone to great personal expense to get certain masks or other ceremonial objects, anyone feels free to use them, and their supernatural powers go to the user.

Gossip, rumor and ridicule are used to control the group. To be different is to be avoided at all costs. Conformity is a virtue. Zunis seem to avoid tribal office since a man must avoid appearance of leadership. To be different in thoughts or actions is to be labeled a "witch" and conspicuousness is to be avoided because it attracts the attention of witches.

The government of the pueblo is in the hands of the Governor, a civil official, and a group of minor officials. These are chosen by the six priests of the supreme council, four rain priests and two additional. This group makes the laws and hands down the decisions. The Bow Priest and the warrior group are responsible for enforcement. The major crime is witchcraft, for which a person can be executed. Theft rarely occurs, since important objects are used by anyone. Homicide, when it occurs, is usually settled by payment of money between the two families, and adultery is no problem because of the ease of marriage and divorce.

The Zunis are extremely artistic. Altars are decorated by designs in colored earths on the floors, screens of slats, painted with symbols of animals and maize, behind the altars, and specially painted bowls of offerings and masks surround them. The kachina masks are very ornate. They completely hide the face and sometimes parts of the upper body. The bird masks have huge movable beaks, kingly crests and feathery ruffs. Costumes are rich in materials and trimmings of jewels and silver.

Songs and dances are used in religious festivals. The singers accompany the dances. Voices sing in unison, the effect is antiphonal, and, when groups overlap each other, contrapuntal. The songs are both solemn and joyful. The chants can go on for hours, and have a characteristic 6 beats followed by a short wail. The different kachinas do different dances and each has its own music. The melodies show a definite influence of the Spanish conquest.

The great wealth of Zuni literature is transmitted orally through the generations. The intricate ritual play must be letter-perfect in rendition and can last for hours.